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In Memoriam

THE awful catastrophe of last week has plunged the whole community in a gloom from which it will take some time to emerge. The loss of the *Titanic* is an international tragedy, and the sympathy expressed for those whose dearest have been lost is absolutely world-wide.

The King and Queen have shown the deepest sympathy for the relatives of those who have perished. Both by word and by deed their Majesties have done all that is possible to help the mourners in this time of terrible trial.

Queen Alexandra and the Princess Royal followed their Majesties' example. To the latter the sad accounts must be a heartrending reminder of the ordeal Her Royal Highness passed through in December last.

Very touching, very solemn, was the service in St. Paul's Cathedral last week, a service never to be forgotten by those who took part in it. Only a few weeks ago the great Cathedral had been thronged for the service of Thanksgiving for the safe return of our King and Queen from their journey by land and sea. Then and Now—"In our joys and in our sorrows, we beseech Thee to hear us, Good Lord."

The Royal Family

The King and Queen return to London this week, and will make Buckingham Palace their headquarters until Whitsuntide, when, according to present arrangements, they will go to Windsor for a few days. In the unlikely event of the Castle not being ready for their occupation, it is said that their Majesties may pass Whit week at Frogmore, but this is unlikely, as in any case the Castle *must* be ready by the middle of June, when the Court goes into residence for Ascot week. Prince and Princess Christian have been staying at Frogmore through the early spring, while Cumberland Lodge was undergoing some alterations. Now they have returned to their own home, and are expected at Schomberg House next month.

A Beginning

Town is slowly filling, but the country is so pleasant just now that it is small wonder people are loth to leave it. There were many weddings both in London and in the country last week, and there are again this. And this week the season may be said to begin in earnest, for there are several dances, nothing very large perhaps, but still enough *pour commencer*, and next week there are dances every night.

The Windsor Ball

Talking of dances, the Windsor Ball, which took place last week, was a great success, really more so than when it is held earlier in the year. All the big houses round were filled, for it coupled with the Brigade Steeplechases at Hawthorn Hill. Lord and Lady Desborough entertained a very large party at Taplow Court, and Lady Emily van der Weyer, Winifred Lady Arran, and Mrs. Christie Miller all brought parties.

Women and Politics

Most of the young married women nowadays are markedly political. Foreigners in this country have always observed that "Society" in England discusses politics with an ease and a knowledge unequalled in any other country, but this characteristic was perhaps more or less limited to the *milieus* of the great political families, who have always so largely dominated public life here. Nowadays, however, even the "smart set" take politics seriously. Popular young leaders of the liveliest section of Society, like Lady Castlereagh, are to be found among the most reasoned and serious advocates of Women's Suffrage, while such a lover of poetry and the peaceful life as Lady Glenconner gives interesting political parties, and another "new" hostess of the spring for the Liberal party is Lady Craven, who had a very political dinner and evening party a few weeks ago. But none takes her politics more seriously than Mrs. Winston Churchill, who has been winning golden opinions at all the ports where she has accompanied the First Lord of the Admiralty, for her tact and graciousness in dealing with people, as well as for the power of mind with which she grapples with naval problems. Certainly women nowadays are not content to derive their political views blindly from their menfolk, and the strongest anti-suffragists (who, by the way, include many leading political women) are the first to admit this. Their policy is a "self-denying ordinance." Thinking, as they do, that a further extension of the franchise would be to the disadvantage of the State, they feel that the part of the patriotic woman is to stand aside from the polling-booths, and serve her country in other ways. Meantime, the Women's Suffrage party in the House of Commons are meditating a counter-stroke against the Irishmen, who stopped the Conciliation Bill, and mean to retaliate with an amendment to the Home Rule Bill. Truly, even without votes, the Feminist interest is not *negligeable* in the House of Commons to-day!

MISS DOROTHY DREW,

whose marriage to Capt. Parrish was fixed for the 22nd inst., is well known as the favourite granddaughter and playmate of the late Mr. Gladstone. (Photo by Lallie Charles)

At Covent Garden

The season of Grand Opera at Covent Garden opened on Saturday night with "Carmen," and already we are involved in the first cycle of the Ring. "Das Rheingold" is given to-night (Tuesday), followed on Thursday by "Walküre," with a new Brünhilde of whom great things are expected, and on Saturday by "Siegfried," with Herr Hensel in the title rôle. Among the subscribers and boxers for the coming season are such well-known habitués as Lord and Lady Ripon, Lord and Lady Lonsdale, the Duchess of Westminster, the American Ambassador, Lord and Lady Londesborough, Lord and Lady Northcliffe, Lady Charles Beresford, Lady Barrymore, Lord and Lady Iveagh, and Lord and Lady Esher.

Next month sees the appearance of Melba, Tetrazzini, and Destinn, but not till June 11th does the famous Russian ballet reappear. One of the features of the season will be the production of Ferrari's "Jewels of the Madonna," an opera which has achieved immense popularity on the Continent.

Little People

Lord and Lady Hastings have received many congratulations on the birth of their son and heir, which took place last week. Lady Hastings is the daughter of Lord and Lady Henry Nevill, and a grand-daughter of that grand old man, Lord Abergavenny.

GOWNS AND GOSSIP:

DRESS OF THE HOUR

My Best Friend,—There is always a certain feeling of demoralisation left by a holiday, and I have found it really hard work to fling myself into the pursuit of fashion-news, after a week of motoring and general laziness. Yet you are waiting to know what is going on, and certainly there is no time to lose, now that the opera has begun and the girls and boys of the family are considering which balls they shall honour with their presence, and which they shall decline.

Dress is going to be very pretty and quite reasonable. The alarming photographs in the Daily Press strike terror into the minds of the unimaginative, but nobody of any taste will be figged out in frightful exaggerated paniers, nor will the well-dressed world be seen in messy little taffetas frocks, chopped up into sections by crossed and recrossed *bouillonnés*. On the other hand, draperies abound, and so do the panier *suggestions*. The plain skirt has not passed away from the scene, and it will survive, but there are differences to be noted everywhere. The point that should be grasped first is that the slender figure and contour remain, so that the draperies are arranged accordingly, and anybody who gives the impression that we are to look like garden water-tubs of various dimensions, garbed in fantastic crinoline loopings and festoonings, is a traitor.

As regards the tailor-made, I have written so much to you upon the subject that there is little more to chronicle. Sponge cloth, black and white whipcord, the never-daunted blue serge, ratine of every width of rib have all their votaries, and the styles are as manifold as the materials. Coats with applied basques are seen side by side with straight-cut coats. Revers are pointed and rounded, they are covered with striped silk and striped piqué, or they are faced up with plain satin. In the last case the coat carries a smart little collar of embroidery, worked in various bright colourings, or the young girl adds a lawn or embroidery collar with good effect. Coats fasten at the waist with one or two buttons, or they cross right over to the left. The length, however, of the tailor-made coat is fairly short, and seems likely to remain so during the summer season.

As regards the silk and satin coats, volumes might be written. The coats either belong to a complete gown, or they are the ordinary accompaniment to a blouse and skirt. For those who have to come up to town for a few weeks, a gown and an additional coat is a splendid possession, because it may be worn or not as weather demands, and it does for race meetings and polo matches, as well as for ordinary lunches and calls. For afternoon wear, I am sure that very soft ninon and marquisette gowns will be accompanied by long coats of supple taffetas or satin merveilleux, and this brings me to an important point. I would have you observe that taffetas as a coat material, and as a foundation for the transparent gown, has serious rivals in surah and merveilleux. Recently I saw a chamois-coloured ribbed silk coat, to be worn over a very soft creamy-looking marquisette gown, and another most attractive dress in a beautiful stained-glass blue tone was shown me, with a long cut-away coat of satin merveilleux.

A new Evening Gown

Flowered silks are making their way, but they really do want very careful making. Some of them are arranged with a kind of draped hem, and others are veiled with marquisette, and it is these latter gowns that are really attractive and wearable. A pale blue soft flowered silk, with a biscuit-coloured closely draped fichu and a slightly draped overskirt is a charming *ensemble* that may be regarded as quite as becoming as any gown of last year. Nobody will quarrel with gowns made like Lady Eileen Butler's bridesmaids' frocks—simple, lace-trimmed ninon skirts, with attractive little coats of taffetas of the softest description, and it is in the rôle of auxiliary coat that taffetas may be expected to play its most successful part as the season advances.

For young girls there are some coats and skirts of ribbed cotton cord that I like very much. Blue-and-white, brown-and-white, or blue, piped with cherry, may be ordered, and these worn with *lingérie* blouses and hats of coarse straw, tied with ribbon, and ornamented with clusters of little roses, are charming for the morning in the season, in the park, and so on. It is certain that these cotton cords will be worn as much as linen. Pretty frocks of thin cashmere and merveilleux are to the fore, the upper portion of the bodice being a mixture of lace and ninon, both in the interests of coolness and of grace.

Before talking of evening gowns, I must tell you something about the dress odds and ends of the day, for in the springtime they are always very important, and they are so obliging in the way they refurbish our coats and skirts and gowns, and encourage us to feel *á la mode*. Ruffles refuse to be ignored, and they are of two kinds. The first consists of a close ruching of tulle, held together by a group of satin roses or a posy of blossoms, or perhaps by a knot of ribbon and long streamers, while the second is the deep pleating of tulle or lace, that comes down over the shoulders like a pierrot's ruffle. The great thing is to test the merits of both, for to some faces one proves becoming, and to another choice lies in exactly the opposite direction. Another pretty addition is a folded band of velvet or ribbon, furnished at the back with a frilling or ruche of tulle, and these little collarettes are really sensible, as well as decorative, because we are all apt to miss our furs when we discard them at first. No doubt, too, exists that ruffles are kindly to those no longer young. When our chins lack the clear-cut outline of youth, or show a tendency to be fuller than is becoming, the ruffle adds a softening influence.

A coat of biscuit-coloured sponge cloth

I am hoping, as you hope, that coloured stockings will be left to the use of the young and small-footed women of the race. Last season, coloured stockings became an obsession, even a nightmare, and this year I am told there is a great demand for fine black silk stockings. Nothing looks nicer than a plain glacé shoe, with a simple buckle and fine silk hose.

I send you the sketch of an evening gown that is typical of the times. The underskirt is of soft satin in a bright green tone. The drapery of ninon is gathered at the base, and is flounced with lace. Green embroidery is used up the front of the gown, while the sleeves are formed of the lace. Here, too, is the sketch of a sponge cloth coat that will be found useful for spring days. It is made in a biscuit-tone, and has a hood and skirt panel of embroidery done in various effective colours. The same coat might be made of satin merveilleux or of soft satin, and in the latter fabric it would become one of those absolute necessities, the general utility coat, available for day or evening wear.—Ever yours, LYDIA LOVELACE.

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